

INTRODUCTION

3

124 Informants' accounts were continually cross-checked and contradictions called to their attention individually. An informant, when thus confronted with a contradiction, and with his reputation for knowledge and veracity at stake, generally provided elaborative supporting detail.

• [465] Informants were ordinarily well paid for the time they spent. Payment was commonly in the form of black gunpowder, percussion caps, lead shot, glass and metallic beads, [436] and cloth. Near Ecuadorian and missionary settlements, [797] money was used as well. When visiting strange households it was found that a gift of an ounce or two of gunpowder 123 invariably resulted in a friendly stay, since almost all Jivaro 124 men today possess firearms and continually need replenishment [411] of their supplies of ammunition. Leave-taking in the more isolated parts of the tribal territory typically involved assuring the host of my future return, and "taking orders" for additional types of trade goods to be brought on the next visit.

[628] Thus my host viewed my continued friendship as being to his advantage and an amiable departure always occurred despite the fact that I was often leaving directly (with gunpowder and other goods) for a household or neighborhood with which he was feuding.

124 My chief mode of communication to obtain detailed information was through interpreters. However, unlike my predecessor, I exclusively used for this purpose Jivaro men who [191] had learned Spanish as a second language at mission stations. [797]

I used a variety of interpreters, eventually working mainly with those who had proven themselves the most accurate, [122] reliable and intelligent. As my own knowledge of the language progressed, I was able to check up on much of that which they interpreted, but even before that stage the comparison of different accounts on the same subject by using different interpreters and informants made substantial veri-

came down in large numbers to try their luck at gold mining. 175
 Unlike their sixteenth-century predecessors, they did not usually 648
 attempt to coerce the Jivaro as conquerors, but came as
 individual prospector-miners. The fact that the Jivaro were [411]
 fairly well equipped with firearms by this time,²² probably
 contributed to this situation. When conflicts with the Jivaro
 occurred, they were usually settled, one way or another,
 directly by the individuals involved.

The gold rush reached its peak in 1937, at which time the
 boom town of Méndez seems to have approached a popu-
 lation of about three thousand—far above that of Macis.
 Shortly, however, a decline in mining profits took place, and
 many of the white prospector-miners returned to the high-
 lands. Others remained to settle permanently in the Uparo,
 Paste, and Zamora valleys.

During these gold rush years, the first horse trail had been [797]
 built into the Jivaro region, connecting the highland province
 of Araya with Méndez, and after the boom was over, the
 trail was kept open by the Salesian missionaries. Gradually,
 Araya mestizos, some of them ex-miners, began to immi-
 grate into the region with their families to raise cattle, which
 they could then drive out over the trail to the city of Cuenca
 to obtain cash. The local Jivaro at first generally welcomed
 the settlers as a new source of factory-manufactured goods, [412]
 particularly machetes and muzzle-loading shotguns, which [465] •
 they received for clearing the forest to make pastures for the
 colonists' cattle.

Cattle raising proved successful, and soon more colonists [423]
 arrived. As their numbers increased and they were augmented
 by military and police units, their fear of the Jivaro dimin-
 ished, and they began seizing the Indians' garden clearings for
 pastures. The Jivaro say that over half of their Uparo Valley [791]
 population also died at this time of epidemics of contagious

756 bewitching shamans (*warwek*, or *yabauči uwışin*: bad shaman) derive their social influence primarily from the fear in which they are held by their neighbors. Their mildly expressed wishes are often interpreted as near commands by laymen. The curing type of shaman (*peyer uwışin*: good shaman) exercises a less ominous type of social power, deriving primarily from the fact that his neighbors tend to view him as an important asset to their welfare. They normally court his favor in order to assure themselves of his future willingness to cure them or members of their family.

[556] In terms of material goods, shamans are invariably the wealthiest persons and usually candidly admit that they supply their services primarily for the purpose of gaining valuables.

• [465] They expect to be paid for their curing or bewitching services with the most highly valued goods available. A single treatment normally nets a curing shaman at least a muzzle-loading shotgun, for example. Often a blowgun, a hunting dog, or a machete is thrown in. Curers often refuse to visit a distant patient unless paid in advance, and, even then, may demand additional payment if the cure requires more than a single night's ministrations.

[431] Among the Jivaro, a request for a gift cannot be refused
[558] without the denier "losing face," making it difficult for the majority of persons to hoard quantities of possessions. While non-shamans continually badger each other for gifts, thereby preventing the accumulation of wealth by a few individuals among themselves, they almost never ask shamans for goods, fearing the wrath of the bewitchers and wishing to cultivate the goodwill of the curers. Thus shamans are usually the only persons able to accumulate significant quantities of goods.

Shamans frequently utilize their wealth and social influence to secure specific services from their non-shaman neighbors.